

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20

USIA-15 AID-20 PC-04 IGA-02 EB-11 COME-00 ACDA-19

DRC-01 /155 W

----- 019456

R 041710Z JAN 74

FM AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4437

INFO AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA

AMSMLNSSZPGUU

SAMGJ3541

AMEMBASSY MANAGUA

AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

USCINCSO

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAN SALVADOR 0037

E.O. 11652 - GNW

TAGS: PFOR, ES

SUBJ: THE MOLINA GOVERNMENT: SOME THOUGHTS FOR 1974 ON
PROSPECTS AND US INTERESTS

USCINCSO FOR POLAD

1. IN ITS FIRST YEAR AND A HALF IN OFFICE, THE MOLINA GOVERNMENT HAS PROVEN TO BE BASICALLY SIMILAR IN PHILOSOPHY TO THE TWO PRECEDING REGIMES OF THE PCN: MIDDLE CLASS, MILDLY REFORMIST, ANTI-RADICAL, FLEXIBLE AND PRAGMATIC. MOLINA HIMSELF HAS BEEN MORE AUTHORITATIVE AND DECISIVE THAN MANY HAD EXPECTED; HOWEVER, HIS RHETORIC HAS OUTDISTANCED HIS ACHIEVEMENTS TO DATE, WHICH IS NOT SURPRISING GIVEN THE SCOPE OF THE PROBLEMS FACED BY EL SALVADOR AND TWE LIMITED RESOURCES AT HAND.

2. IN 1974, THE ADMINISTRATION'S POLICIES AND PROGRAMS

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WILL CONTINUE TO BE INFLUENCED BY ITS PERCEPTION OF THE SALVADORAN

43ALITY, AND A PARAMOUNT OBJECTIVE WILL BE THE MAINTENANCE OF
THE STABILITY OF THE REGIME ITSELF; THUS, MAINTAINING CORDIAL RELATIONS

BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT AND THE ARMED FORCES WILL REMAIN
A CONSIDERATION OF MAJOR IMPORTANCE. EFFORTS WILL CONTINUE TO
DEVELOP A BROADER POLITICAL CONSENSUS FOR THE GOVERNMENT,
ESPECIALLY IN THE COUNTRYSIDE. ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT
ISSUES WILL REPRESENT MAJOR CHALLENGES BUT EFFORTS IN THESE
FIELDS WILL BE TEMPERED BY THE POLITICAL CONSIDERATIONS NOTED
ABOVE AND RADICAL REFORM PROGRAMS ARE UNLIKELY. ON THE
INTERNATIONAL SCENE, EL SALVADOR'S RELATIONS WITH THE REST
OF CENTRAL AMERICA WILL BE OF MAJOR IMPORTANCE WITH THE
HONDURAS/SALVADOR DISPUTE CONTINUING TO BE KEY TO THE ISSUE.
THE FAILURE OF ANY FUTURE NEGOTIATIONS COULD CONCEIVABLY
PRODUCE A DOMESTIC BACKLASH AGAINST HONDURAS THAT WOULD MAKE
EVENTUAL SETTLEMENT EVEN MORE REMOTE AND PERHAPS, EVEN
ADVERSELY AFFECT EL
SALVADOR'S RELATIONS WITH ITS OTHER
NEIGHBORS.

3. THE ROLE FOR THE US IN THE SALVADORAN SCHEME OF
THINGS WILL REMAIN LIMITED IN 1974, GIVEN THE LACK OF
MAJOR US INTERESTS, THE MODEST LEVEL OF US ASSISTANCE
PROGRAMS AND THE NATURE OF THE ISSUES THAT THE GOES WILL
FACE. RECALLING THE SOMEWHAT UNEVEN STATE OF THE US/
SALVADORAN RELATIONS THAT MARKED THE OUTSET OF THE MOLINA
REGIME, OCCASIONAL REASSURANCES OF THE FRIENDLY TIES THAT
EXIST BETWEEN THE TWO GOVERNMENTS WOULD SEEM PRUDENT AS WOULD
THE CONTINUATION OF A MODEST ASSISTANCE PROGRAM TO DEMONSTRATE
US GOODWILL. ON DOMESTIC POLITICAL QUESTIONS, THERE IS
LITTLE THAT THE US CAN, NEED OR SHOULD DO SO LONG AS THE
GOES DOES NOT RESORT TO FLAGRANT REPRESSION OF THE LEGITIMATE
OPPOSITION DURING OR AFTER THE SCHEDULED LEGISLATIVE/MUNICIPAL
ELECTION PROCESS. THE US' ABILITY TO ADVANCE A SETTLEMENT
OF THE HONDURAS/SALVADOR DISPUTE WILL ALSO REMAIN LIMITED
ALTHOUGH THE US CAN CONTRIBUTE SOMEWHAT TO REGIONAL STABILITY,
AS IT HAS, BY ENCOURAGING PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT OF DISPUTES
AND BY SERVING AS AN INFORMAL CHANNEL OF COMMUNICATION TO
CLARIFY INTENTIONS AND ACTIONS OF ONE SIDE TOWARD THE OTHER.

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4. A MORE DETAILED ANALYSIS OF THE PROSPECTS FOR 1974 IS
FOUND IN EMBASSY'S A-1 OF JAN 4, 1974.
MOSKOWITZ

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: POLITICAL STABILITY, POLITICAL SITUATION, CENTRAL GOVERNMENT, FOREIGN ASSISTANCE
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 04 JAN 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: golinofr
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974SANSAA00037
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: SAN SALVADOR
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740162/aaaacgaz.tel
Line Count: 110
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: golinofr
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 09 SEP 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <09 SEP 2002 by kelleyw0>; APPROVED <09 DEC 2002 by golinofr>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: THE MOLINA GOVERNMENT: SOME THOUGHTS FOR 1974 ON PROSPECTS AND US INTERESTS
TAGS: PFOR, ES, (MOLINA BARRAZA, ARTURO ARMANDO)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005